

'Totally dedicated to lettings -
it's all we do'

Specialist Letting & Managing agent

Established since 1991

Members of National Approved Letting Scheme

Members of Brighton & Hove Estate
Agents Association

Full client money protection insurance

FREE professional advice

Fully referenced tenants

Quality portfolio of property

Extensive advertising &
marketing



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Approved by



A Warm Welcome to Town & Country Property Services



Town & Country Property Service's Hove Office

Town & Country Property Services have been established in Brighton since 1991 specialising in the management and letting of quality properties and manage hundreds of properties on behalf of both UK and Overseas based Landlords. Town & Country Property Services probably have more non-UK resident Landlords than any other Agent in the area, due to a close association with a Far Eastern company whose clients have brought many properties which are let and managed by us. In addition we also let many hundreds of properties on behalf of Landlords who wish to undertake their own management.

We are members of the National Approved Letting Scheme, a government backed organisation which ensures you receive the highest standard of service. We have full Professional Indemnity and Client Money Protection Insurance which is your guarantee that your money is totally safe.



Unlike many other Agents the day to day management of properties is undertaken by Directors and Senior staff. This ensures that not only is the highest quality of service given but that you will always be assured of speaking to people who can make decisions and give information immediately.

Town & Country Property Services can also undertake the finding and refurbishment of properties on behalf of Landlords. We are able to oversee all aspects of the work and then let and manage the property. Many clients have found that the medium to long term return on their investment far exceeds that which could be achieved through other means.

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Advice on letting your property

Following a no obligation inspection of your property our free professional advice will be made available to you in respect of the rent you can achieve. We will also suggest any improvements that may be needed to make your property more attractive to prospective tenants to achieve the maximum possible rent. We can advise on what to leave and what not to leave, the advantages and disadvantages of letting furnished or unfurnished, advice on your legal obligations and who needs to be notified before and after a tenant has been found.

We appreciate that many Landlords are letting their private home for the first time and will have numerous questions to ask. We will spend as long as it takes to answer these for you. On the other hand if you are an experienced Landlord wanting to let your property as soon as possible it will be placed on our listing and marketed immediately with a minimum of fuss.

The process of letting a property is much quicker than selling and tenants will usually want to view immediately and make a decision on the spot. It is important that your property is available to view as easily as possible and we, therefore, strongly advise Landlords to supply us with keys in order that we may let it quickly and start producing an income. If you are in residence we will always arrange an appointment time by telephone convenient with you and we always accompany prospective tenants to viewings.



Choosing the right tenants

Every property is extensively advertised and marketed through local media. We also publish a property list, which is updated at least daily. Due to our prominent High Street position, where we have been for over ten years, we have a constant stream of prospective tenants visiting our offices. The Internet is becoming more and more influential in our lives and particularly so in the marketing of property. Our website gives details of all available properties and we also use other property dedicated sites that have proven to produce good quality tenants.



All prospective tenants are accompanied to view properties by one of our experienced negotiators. Once they have decided they wish to rent a particular property we will interview the applicants and take up references from their employer, bank, previous Landlord or Agent and a personal referee. In many instances we will also insist on a guarantor who can make payment of the rent in the event of any default and they are also bank referenced. Only if we are totally satisfied with our enquiries will we then proceed to draw up a Tenancy Agreement. Before moving in tenants must pay the first month's rent in advance and a damage deposit equal to at least one month's rent. This is held by us in our separate Client account and only released once we have inspected the property following their departure and when we are satisfied with its condition.



Assured Shorthand Tenancies

Under the Housing Act 1988 as amended 1996 all tenancy agreements are deemed to be Assured Shortholds unless specifically stated otherwise irrespective of whether a property is furnished or unfurnished. The minimum length of time that a tenancy can be granted for is six months but it can be for any length of time in excess of this. At the end of the tenancy you are legally entitled to vacant possession of the property providing notice of at least two months in line with a rent period has been given to the tenant/s. If the tenants wish to continue to rent the property at the end of the initial period there is no legal requirement for them to sign another tenancy agreement. The tenancy becomes 'periodic' which means that the tenants stay in occupation on the same terms and conditions as originally agreed. As and when they wish to vacate they have to give one month's notice in line with a rent period. If at any time you want the property back you have to give two months notice on the same basis. The agreement we use is a standard AST, which has been authorised by many banks and building societies and can be used by Landlords who have a mortgage on the property.



Bills and Outgoings

Tenants are responsible for the payment of all utility bills incurred from the day they move in. This also includes Council Tax, which falls to the occupants of the property to pay. We will notify all the utilities of the occupation of the new tenants prior to them moving in. If you are letting a leasehold flat you are responsible for payment of the maintenance charge and ground rent levied by the managing agent or Freeholder. Under our full management service the account can be sent directly to ourselves for settlement out of rental income if required.

Furnished or unfurnished

Furnished or Unfurnished

We have found through long experience that most demand for rented accommodation is for unfurnished properties. Not only do tenants in unfurnished property tend to stay longer as, with their own possessions in the property, it feels more 'homely' but the difference in rent achieved between furnished and unfurnished is negligible nowadays as renting becomes more a choice of lifestyle than necessity.

All soft furnishings provided by a Landlord have to comply with the Fire and Furnishing (Safety) Regulations and bear a British 'Kitemark' showing that they comply with these regulations meaning that they have to be relatively modern. In addition furniture, particularly soft furnishings such as sofas, chairs and beds, will have a finite life in rented accommodation and the cost of replacements over a period of time would negate any small amount of increased rent achieved.

The regulations do not apply to carpets and curtains and these are provided in unfurnished property by the Landlord as are, normally, appliances such as fridges and washing machines.

Inventories/Schedule of Conditions

It is vital that an inventory – in the case of furnished properties - or a schedule of condition – for unfurnished is provided to ingoing tenants in order that all parties have a written record of the contents and/or condition of the property which can be checked on vacation. In the case of our full management or letting and rent collection services we will draw these up, free of charge. When the tenants come to vacate we will check the condition of the property against this. Landlords cannot claim the replacement of items on a 'new for old' basis and must allow for 'fair wear and tear' if anything has been damaged but they are entitled to utilise the tenants deposit against any damages or dilapidations which have occurred during the tenancy which have not been caused as a result of fair wear and tear.





Landlords Requirements

Landlord Requirements

In addition to Landlords ensuring that any soft furnishings in the property comply with safety regulations it is also a legal requirement that all gas appliances within rented accommodation are inspected by a registered CORGI engineer on an annual basis and a certificate issued to verify their safety. It is a CRIMINAL offence if this is not done.

In the case of our managing a property we will automatically carry this out to comply with the regulation. The Landlord is also responsible for ensuring that all electrical appliances, wiring and sockets within the property are safe although there is no legal requirement currently for a safety certificate to be issued as with gas appliances. If you have a mortgage on the property you should ensure that your bank or building society are aware that you will be letting it and obtain their permission and comply with any necessary consents they may require.

If your property is Leasehold it is also advisable to check the terms of your lease to ensure that there are no restrictions on your letting. If any permission is required this should be obtained before marketing of the property commences to avoid any problems once tenants are found. If you have any doubts or queries you should contact your Freeholder or their managing agent. It is also advisable to check that any insurances you have allow for subletting of the property. It is your responsibility to insure your own contents but not the tenants.



Range of Services

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Town & Country Property Services can offer a tailor made service to suit your requirements but the three most popular are as follows:

FULL MANAGEMENT

This is an all encompassing service whereby we find suitable tenants, take up full references, draw up the tenancy agreement and take an agreed damage deposit (usually one month's rent). We collect the rent on a monthly basis. An itemised statement is provided and the net income transferred direct to your designated bank account. We carry out quarterly inspections of the property to ensure that it is being kept in a satisfactory condition and deal with any maintenance problems that the tenants have. If you wish you can nominate your own contractors for us to use for plumbing, electrics etc. otherwise we will use our own experienced and fully qualified ones. We ask for authority to instruct any repairs up to an agreed amount (normally £100). If the cost is above this we will contact you where possible for authorisation unless they are of an emergency nature. Prior to the tenancy commencing we will draw up an inventory or schedule of condition depending on whether the property is furnished or unfurnished and check the condition of the property against this when tenants vacate. We will arrange for any repairs or cleaning that are required as a result of the tenants occupation and deduct the cost of these from the tenants deposit (fair wear and tear excepted)

LETTING AND RENT COLLECTION

We follow the same procedures as for Full Management with the exceptions that you are responsible for inspecting the property and dealing with the tenants on any maintenance problems.

LETTING ONLY

We will carry out all the referencing procedures, draw up the tenancy agreement and collect the deposit and first month's rent. We will set up a standing order between the tenants account and yours for payment of the ongoing rent (or any other payment system required) after which you will deal with the tenants directly on all matters.





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